

Episode 6: William Saga: Mekinges

Conner Prairie's Curator of Native American History & Life is joining us to talk about the story of Mekinges. Mekinges was a Lenape woman who lived on the land that is now Conner Prairie at the turn of the 19th century. She was William Conner's first wife and had six children with him before experiencing removal with her community. We explore how her story has been told in the past and the changes being made to better share her experience with the world.

Sarah Schumacher:

Who is Sara?

Sara is a recent graduate of the MA Curatorship program at Indiana University Bloomington.

During her time at Bloomington she worked at IUMAA in the Archeology lab with Dr Melody Pope. Their work included rehousing artifacts from the Angel Mounds Collection under the *Saving America's Treasures Grant*.

Sara also volunteered at the Wiley House Museum, whilst there she worked to maintain the historic heirloom seed saving project and documented artifacts found in the garden.

Prior to this she undertook an Undergraduate degree also at IU Bloomington in Anthropology with a focus in Archeology and a minor Native American & Indigenous Studies. Her time there was funded by the Indiana University Provost Scholarship. Some of her activities whilst there included President of the Lambda Alpha, Kappa Chapter, Anthropological Honors Society and recipient of Mary Ann Savage Archeological Fieldwork Grant in 2019.

She is Conner Prairie's new Curator of Native American History and Life and you can see her official institutional introduction below.

Link to Sara's introduction at Conner Prairie: <https://www.connerprairie.org/new-curatorial-team-addition-at-conner-prairie-continues-advancing-diversity-in-museums-staff-exhibits-and-experiences/>

Our Sources:

Charles N. Thompson. Sons of the Wilderness (Indiana Historical Society, 1937). ****NOT a recommended historically objective or accurate source. Few sources exist so occasionally this is consulted to guide to primary sources. The author was a friend of the family and the narrative is deeply problematic (a topic for another podcast!)****

John Lauritz Larson & David G. Vanderstel. "Agent of Empire: William Conner on the Indiana Frontier, 1800-1855," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. 80, No. 4 (December 1984). Pp. 301-328.

James Brown & Rita Kohn. Long Journey Home: Oral Histories of Contemporary Delaware Indians (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008).

Ma chun chis. Census of the Delaware Tribe of Indians Within the Delaware Agency Taken February 15th 1862. From "Delaware Trails: Some Tribal Records, 1842-1907". From Ancestry.com.

Multiple articles at Official Site of Delaware Tribe of Indians accessed at <https://delawaretribe.org>. ****This represents one group of the Lenape people, there are many groups and their stories intersect with the stories told here but are not representative of all experiences****